

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

62.09

=1952=

Be

LIBRARY
RECEIVED

☆ FEB 15 1952 ☆

U. S. Department of Agriculture

How to Grow
Hybrid
Nerines

Palos
Verdes

BEGONIA FARM

4024 Pacific Coast Highway
Walteria, California

Near Redondo Beach Highway 101

SELECTED HYBRID NERINES

Hybrid Nerines are beautiful—they dazzle—in many respects they rank with the finest of cymbidiums (outdoor orchids). The selected improved hybrid nerines are far superior to what is commonly called nerine or Guernsey lily, such specii as *N. Sarniensis* *N. Curvifolia*, *N. Bowdini*, *N. Flexuosa* and *N. Pudica*.

These specii when selectively crossed and recrossed have produced hybrids we speak of. All garden lovers should grow hybrid nerines for their enjoyment as well as for the enjoyment of others.

HISTORY

The nerine is a bulbous plant belonging to the family Amaryllidace; the specii are native of South Africa and have been known for two hundred years and more. The legend goes, that a number of native bulbs aboard a sailing vessel bound for unknown parts was ship wrecked, cast upon the shores of the Isle of Guernsey where they took root, thrived and later became known as the Guernsey Lily (*N. Sarniensis*). Through culture and hybridizing by the English and further selection and hybridizing in this country, we now have a highly



N. FOTHERGILL MAJOR

developed full blooming flower. The improved hybrid *N. Fothergilli major* being one of the most outstanding varieties. We stock many of the named varieties and have many more unnamed ones coming into flower through our own hybridizing for the past eight years.

The nerine should not be confused with *Lycoris radiata*, sometimes called *Nerine Japonica*, a native of China and Japan. Although

somewhat related, the hybrid nerine has many superior qualities. One of the distinguishing features is that all *Lycoris* have black seeds while all true nerines have green seeds.

DESCRIPTION

Our improved hybrid nerines are in the advanced stages of perfection. They are beautiful; they have interesting forms, exquisite colors and lasting qualities. The flowers are born in clusters or umbells of six to twenty-four funnel-shaped blooms on a single stem. The flower spikes are from four to six inches in diameter. The stems are from twelve to eighteen inches in length. The perianth segments of the flower glisten as if the entire surface were set with tiny mirrors giving a sparkling brilliance—they dazzle in the sunlight or artificial light as if they were dusted with small particles of gold and silver.

They range in color from scarlet through salmon, coral rose, pink to blush and white, often adorned with a stripe down the center of the petal. Some petals appear as though they had a permanent wave; they are the dream of the flower enthusiast in delicacy and perfection. As cut flowers the nerine is unexcelled for keeping qualities—when associated with light graceful foliage as maidenhair ferns they lend themselves to beautiful arrangements. They bloom during the month of September to November, coming at a time when other flowers are scarce. Because of their sturdiness, keeping qualities and lustre, they are the pride of the florist in making corsages.

Foliage follows blooming and consists of about six narrow leaves to the bulb, varying from eight to eighteen inches in length. Bulbs range in size from one-half inch to two inches in diameter, depending upon age and care.

CULTURE

The Nerine is a long-lived bulb—it is easily grown—it is propagated by seed and offsets. It requires four years from seed to grow into a flowering bulb. The offsets, bulblets or side shoots from mature bulbs flower in two to three years. They may be separated from the parent bulb during their dormant period by removing top two inches of soil, rubbing off bulblets, then replacing with fresh soil—the parent bulbs not being disturbed.

The flowers are readily hybridized and with systematic crossing, patience and care many new varieties with superior qualities of color and lustre will result.

The secret of success with nerines is to secure the fullest possible development of the bulbs.

The nerine likes good drainage and a compost of sandy loam with a little peat or leaf-mould. They flower much better if not given too much space—in other words, three or four bulbs to a seven-inch pot, or when planted in the ground four to five inches apart. The neck and crown of the bulb should show above the surface after planting. Nerines should be repotted once every four or five years, not more. In the ground they need not be moved.



N. MRS. H. J. ELWES

They are actually outdoor plants but do not stand severe frosts and grow better under even temperatures. They flower best in full sunlight but do nicely in partial shade. Localities where light frosts occur, they may be mulched with straw. Where temperatures are lower than forty degrees for long periods, they should be kept indoors near a sunny window.

The flower spikes begin to appear in August and September and bloom until November, depending upon location. Transplanting or disturbing too frequently will interrupt their blooming. Fertilize with a little bonemeal, fish-meal, commercial fertilizer or liquid manure once or twice a year. Nerines have no disease or pests so far known.

As a rule the flower stalks appear first, followed by the leaves. Watering should start when flower stalks appear and soil should be kept moist, not too wet, all through blooming and growing season. We have two exceptions in the varieties mentioned on the following pages; that of *Aurora* and *Hera*. These two varieties throw out foliage before flower spikes. When growth starts in February in their case, they should be watered sparingly until April,

then generously until November, after which they should be kept dry. But for the above exceptions the Nerine vegetates and grows after blooming up to April or May at which time the leaves start to turn yellow, thus entering their dormant period. Watering should then cease so that the bulbs will have complete rest until fall when the cycle starts again. It is most essential that they have a rest period—preferably in direct sun and no water whatsoever. They should rest in the soil.

HYBRID VARIETIES

Aurora, hybrid cross of N. Bowdeni and N. Fothergilli. Large flowers, satiny rose with silver lavender stripe down the center of the petals.

Barcarolle, old rose with deep stripe, gold dusted.

Burgundy, copper red with mauve shading, gold dusted, scarlet bar down each petal.

Blazing Star, rich, fiery, much reflexed scarlet flowers, large trusses.

Dawn, rich satiny pink, shot with gold and slightly suffused mauve, splendid trusses.

Empire Day, a glowing rose crimson, heavily gold dusted giving almost a fiery sheen to the flowers, very strong grower.

Fothergilli major, large umbels of handsome brilliant salmon red flowers, shaded scarlet, showy, reliable and free blooming. One of the most satisfactory bloomers.

Her Majesty, glowing rose cerise, deeper at center and gold dusted, large flower, extra fine.

Hera, very large flowers, similar to Aurora, rose pink with rose stripe down center of petal, early bloomer.

Hilda, light salmon red with gold dusting, good truss, tall grower.

Ingens, deep salmon pink, rose stripe half way up petal, early flowering.

Judith?

Knight Errant, bright rose-crimson, shot gold and shading to scarlet at center, petals waved.

Knight Templar, brilliant glistening rose with crimson stripe, very large open flowers with recurving petals, robust grower.

Lady Ffolkes, rich bright clear pink, excellent spike and truss.

Lady Mary Shelley, large open flowers, soft clear shell pink, slightly deeper toward the center, with wavy and recurving petals.

Lucifer, glowing deep crimson—scarlet self, a good reliable variety.

Lydia, a very pretty pink variety, large flowers with waved petals.

Lillian?

Manselli, tall handsome variety, having bold heads of satiny rose-pink flowers, late bloomer.

Meadowbanki, fiery orange-scarlet flowers, petals slightly waved and recurved.

Miranda, a glowing rich cerise, with crimson center, large flowers, good truss, strong grower.

Mrs. H. J. Elwes, waxy shell-pink flowers with silvery sheen and rose throat, petals much curved and reflexed.

Nymph, a pure white variety with narrow pink stripe, waved petals, open truss.

Peter Bar, large open trusses of glistening rose flowers deepening toward the center and with sparkling golden sheen.

Plantii, bright rose-scarlet flowers, gold dusted, very reliable.

Princess Mary?

Queen Mary, very large glistening pink flowers with reflexing petals.

Queen Natalie?

Red Hussar, large salmon-scarlet flowers, gold dusted, large truss of vigorous growth.

Robert Berkeley, rich salmon rose shot with gold, large flowers, free bloomer.

Ronald, deep coral-red, with deep colored stripe, petals well curved and reflexed.

Rosella, large bright rose-pink flowers with reflexing petals.

Roweana, large trusses of coral red flowers with deep salmon star.

Royal Dragoon, glowing deep rose-crimson, heavily gold dusted.

Royal Prince, large deep crimson-scarlet flowers, shot purple with scarlet star.

Salmon Perfection, perfect large truss of clear light salmon flowers, tall strong grower.

Sieglinde, large glistening satiny pink flowers with deeper bar, tall stem.

Talisman, bright salmon-scarlet with gold dusting, large trusses and flowers.

Thalia, deep salmon with deeper bar, gold dusted, large truss and tall stem.

The above hybrid nerines were imported from England about ten years ago. In the intervening years many beautiful heavily gold dusted and novel hybrids have been developed, all of which at present are unnamed. Mr. Frank Reinelt of Capitola, Calif., started the collection in this country and through his efforts many hybrids were started on their way. The collection has grown from 6000 bulbs when it was purchased from Mr. Reinelt six years ago to over 40,000 through patient and continued hybridizing by Dr. J. K. Reticker and G. A. Bauman of the Palos Verdes Begonia Farm.

Many new varieties are coming into bloom this year for the first time and we will endeavor to name them before placing them on the market.

